DISCOURSE ONTHE ADOPTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS IN THE NIGERIAN BROADCASTING INDUSTRY

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Abstract

The adoption and application of social media in the broadcasting industry is the current trend to enhance efficiency. Despite this development, there are limited studies regarding the adoption of social media among broadcasting organizations in this part of the world. It is against this backdrop that this study set out to ascertain the adoption of social media platforms in the Nigerian broadcasting industry. Library research was relied uponwith secondary data drawn from text books, documents, journals and online sources for analysis while the technological determinism theory was adopted as a theoretical framework. Results from the study established that broadcast stations in Nigeria have adopted social media tools in their operations. Results further indicate that the adoption of social media tools have proven to be effective in the broadcasting industry through real-time reporting and engagement, audience interaction and personalization, information gathering and production, content promotion and brand identity, information sharing and backup. Finally, the challenges associated with the use of social media tools for broadcasting operations range from lack of gatekeepers, fear of privacy invasion, inability to cater for those with a disability, problems of commercial advertising, and the challenge of making terms of the agreement a prerequisite to creating a profile or owning an account,

and susceptibility to deception from users across the spectrum, privacy concerns, lack of interpretations to information overload.In conclusion, the adoption of social media tools in the Nigeria broadcasting industry has proven to be effective to some extent. The study has contributed to knowledge on the adoption of social media platforms in the Nigerian broadcasting industry. The study therefore recommends full time adoption of social media platforms for enhanced real-time reporting and audience engagement as many Nigerians no longer rely on the traditional media while regulating the application in the industry to prevent abuse among broadcasters.

Introduction

The advent of social media platforms have altered the fundamental roles of conventional broadcasting, giving radio and television stations exclusive rights to broadcast news and programmes on TV sets, satellites and Cable**.** This implies that social media has revolutionalised the broadcast industry. It has changed broadcasting in ways that have enhanced its activity and pose threats. It is argued that traditional TV channels face the risk of being obsolete due to the Internet and social media, as viewers increasingly prefer online live streaming on websites, podcasts, and social media platforms like X (Twitter), Facebook, and YouTube on smartphones, iPads, laptops and desktops (Napoli, 2019).

Scholars like Olarinmoye, et al.,2014) asserts that every television station now pushes its content on mobile applications and this, therefore, implies that TV content can be accessed on mobile devices for enabled access by viewers or users; hence there must be value for the money and time through enriched contents. To deliver this content, TV stations require high broadband internet connectivity for streaming, highly skilled professionals in the IT areas and more multimedia Journalists with their attendant costs (Bruns, 2018).

As the world's communication is rapidly growing, the internet and associated technologies have now become part of everyday life of people, from its usage in connecting with friends, relatives and loved ones through chats, video or voice calls, or accessing news at the fingertip, or surfing the internet to get information about virtually everything, technology is in no small measure changing the way lives are lived. Media organisations around the world are not left out of the conversation as they are also direct recipients of the development especially as it has facilitated and also simplified ways of sourcing and disseminating news (Bruns&Highfield, 2016).

Social media draws its strength from the Internet that is categorised by as a new media platform. Agbawe (2018) rightly observed that since the advent of social media, journalism and the media landscape have not remained the same. This, notwithstanding, is a subtle way to caption the sweeping impact of technological innovations on the media industry. In the same vein, Inobemhe and Tsegyu (2021) argues that technological improvements have always been received by the media with mixed feelings. On one hand, the media sees promising input that technology brings, and on the other, jobs get threatened. However, technology has always been channeled towards positive usage and its adoption has always turned out to be the way forward for the media industry in Nigeria (Creech, 2020).

Social networks has changed the work and structure of late modern media, after all, it has become possible not only to transmit information around the clock but also to get prompt feedback and comments. Such possibility is associated with the emergence of the social network *Facebook* in 2004, which allow users to highlight their messages from audio and video files and stream them to friends or subscribers (i.e. followers). With it, the journalist can (on the authorisation of the line editor or supervisor) post media content on behalf of his media organisation either on an officially recognised handle or page or on a personal account with a link provided for the audience to also visit the organisation's official page or handle for more reports (Igyuve, et al., 2020).

Furthermore, new media technologies provide flexibility to the media, allowing them to keep their audience informed at any time, even for those who may not have the luxury of watching television or listening to the radio. Reporters and other journalists have the flexibility of making use of social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger and many more to file reports to the newsroom as the news breaks (Ogundele, 2013). Back in those days, journalists had to queue up to be able to use a single available fax machine to send news back to their respective media organisations but today, the case is different.This implies that the adoption and application of social media in the broadcasting industry is the current trend to enhance efficiency. Despite this development, there are limited studies regarding the adoption of social media among broadcasting organizations in this part of the world. It is against this backdrop that this study set out to ascertain the adoption of social media platforms in the Nigerian broadcasting industry.

Objectives of the study

The broad objective of this study is to ascertain the adoption of social media platforms in the Nigerian broadcasting industry. The specific objectives of the study includes to:

1. determine the adoption of social media platforms in the Nigerian broadcasting industry
2. establish the effectiveness of social media platforms in the broadcast industry
3. identify the challenges of using social media platforms in the broadcast industry

Review of concepts

The concepts of social media and broadcasting have been extensively reviewed in this section of the study for a better understanding:

Social Media

Social media refers to all forms of new media technology that offer interactive sharing of information, videos, pictures, text and comments with such websites as X (Twitter), Facebook, Myspace, YouTube etc. These social media channels serve as effective platforms in facilitating communication locally and globally. Boyd and Allison (2007) define social network sites as "web-based services that allow individuals to construct public or semi-public profile within bounded systems, articulate list of other users with whom they share a connection and view and traverse their list of connections with those made by others within the systems". The definition focuses on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. Based on a strict theoretical understanding, all network tools that allow establishing connections between at least two humans, have to be understood as social networking platforms.

Social media also refers to a means of interaction among people as they create, share, and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks(Digital Communications website (2014). The review has established that social media are internet based tools that facilitates communication among users. Social media has also gained widespread adoption in the broadcast industry to enhance productivity.

Broadcasting

Broadcasting is the distribution of audio-visual content to the dispersed audience of radio and television. The media consist of a variety of communication channels such as radio, television, video and film, newspapers, magazines, pamphlets and posters; the internet, e-mail and telephones; theatre, dance, music and puppetry. According to Ojete (2008), these media serve purposefully in facilitating the effectual transmission of information as the media, the broadcast media is considered more appropriate in the provision of information, education and entertainment especially in developing societies like Nigeria.

Broadcast media covers a wide spectrum of different communication mediums such as television and radio. UNDP (2006) states that 'Broadcast media' is more narrowly defined and consists of 'electronic media', i.e. television and radio. From the foregoing, broadcasting is the distribution of audio and video content to a dispersed audience via any audio or visual communications medium but usually one using electromagnetic radiation (radio waves).

Theoretical underpinning

The study adopted the technological determinism theory as the most suitable theory forthe adoption of social media platforms in the Nigerian broadcasting industry. Coined by ThorsteinVeblen (1857-1929), the theory states that a society's technology drives the development of its social structure and cultural values.

Adler and Borys (1993) advocates that as people's technology changes, so does society because it is affecting how people think, feel and operate. This theory further state that communication and technology developments dictates how people communicate with one another and how that affects the messages that are sent and received.

The idea behind the theory is that technology has important effects on lives. This idea figures prominently in the popular imagination and political rhetoric, for example in the idea that the internet is revolutionizing the economy and society. Technological determinism seeks to show technical developments, media or technology as a whole as the key mover in history and social change. Most interpretations of technological determinism according to McQuail (2005) share two general ideas:

1. That the development of technology itself follows a predictable, traceable path beyond cultural or political influence and
2. That technology in turn has effects that are inherent, rather than socially conditioned or produced because that society organises itself to support and further develop a technology once it has been introduced.

Technological determinism has been considered as an approach that identifies technology, or technological advances as the central causal element processes of social change. As technology is stabilized, its design tends to dictate users' behaviours, consequently diminishing human agency. This stance however ignores the social and cultural circumstances in which the technology was developed.

Sociologist Claude Fischer (1992) characterised the most prominent forms of technological determinism as 'billiard ball' approaches, in which technology is seen as an external force introduced into a social situation producing a series of ricochet effects.

Technological determinism specifically views technology as an autonomous force that changes society. This provides explanations for many changes that can be observed in society, and it has a very simple cause/effect form. The theory states that technology shapes and changes the way individuals think, interact, feel and act and how societies organise themselves and operate. In this regard, we cannot deny the fact that we live in technology and that all of us including the elders are becoming a part of this transition.

It also sees technology as the basis of all human activity and since media is an aspect of human activity; it has been greatly influenced by the social media platforms Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Google Plus, Skype, Blog and others which are by-product of the 21st-century media technology. The theory is thus considered appropriate for this study because it reinforces the emergence of television and social media platforms from a technological point of view. Television and social media platforms, therefore, have a lot in common as veritable instruments of social engineering and entertainment. Television combines audio and visual messages to the people, within a space and time allotted by the technicians, news and programme producers. While social media platforms have brought into focus the elements of audio-visuals, text, graphics and a high sense of aesthetics, it is devoid of space and time for their users. Because social media platforms are not encumbered by space and time, television stations have taken up these value additions to satisfy viewers at the slightest opportunity.

Research methodology

The library research was adopted for this study as the primary instrument for data collection. Library research involves systematically collection of data from a range of library resources, including books, scholarly journals and articles. As Kowalsky (2019) cited in Nyitse and Akanden (2025) asserts that this approach centres on using library materials to find data that address specific questions or fulfill particular research needs. The implication is that by utilising library research, researchers gain access to authoritative information, deepen their understanding of their subject and make meaningful contributions to their fields. The justification for using library research for this study is to enable the researchers collect secondary data from available sources such as journals, books, documents and online sources to strengthen the discourse on the adoption of social media platforms in the Nigerian broadcasting industry.

Literature Review

Adoption of social media in the broadcast industry

Professionally, there have been several attempts have been made in studying the adoption and use of social media in newsroom operations. To this effect, Apuke (2016), assert that, journalists were found to be familiar with social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. However, the study revealed that Facebook is the most popular social media platform amongst journalists in the Jalingo metropolis. The study also acknowledged that social media types are numerous it identified Twitter, and YouTube as other social media forms known to journalists in the area of focus.

Imperatively, Benedict (2013), mentioned that, among all broadcast industry participants, TV is the most active in its use of social media applications such as Twitter, and Facebook as well as niche applications such as Instagram. Furthermore, musical and reality TV shows rely heavily on social media to drive content and ratings." For musical programmes, social media platforms allow viewers to directly help to promote and encourage the growth of its base. People/ fans contribute additional details and insights about the show. He agreed that broadcasters are always leveraging social networks to deliver new types of content and interact with viewers beyond the programme. It is now a regular on the TV screen to see inscriptions such as "follow us on Twitter, like this programme and add your comments on Facebook, join us on google plus" among others. Against this background, social media as social networking tools are helping listeners to follow breaking news, keep up with friends or colleagues, contribute to online debates or learn from others.

Social media has many uses and serves different purposes, as news sites, it provides users with links to access articles, videos, podcasts and so on (Go, 2019). The amazing thing about this capability provided by social media is that traditional news outlets can also take advantage of available features to share news content with a wider audience. Apuke (2016) reveals that journalists make use of Facebook (which is a social media type) because of its wider coverage and the opportunity to access news sources. This finding implies that journalists take advantage of social media as a source of news. In a 2021 digital report by John (2021), it was found that Google received the highest visits from Nigerians over the period covered with over 220 million hits. The implication of this is that Nigerians make use of the internet for varied reasons ranging from Google searches to research and even dating.

New media tools have played significant roles in the transformation of journalism practice to the extent that the Internet has assumed a significant position about being a major source of information (Obijiofor&Hanusch, 2013). The impacts of social media are innumerable as research reveals that journalists chose social media as a journalism tool because reports can be filed from anywhere, just as much as they have made news monitoring a seamless process (Apuke, 2016). According to Idowu et al. (2019), social media use increases information supply. Platforms also help journalists and media organizations keep up with their audience as through alternative platforms, they can always get in touch. It was observed by Apuke (2016) that social media helps journalists in Nigeria to explore various sites regularly. In contrast, a study by Didiugwu et al. (2015) revealed that social media has impacted negatively the performance of journalists in Nigeria.

In Nigeria, Channels TV was the first broadcast media organisation to adopt the use of social media tools in its operations. According to Ayodeji, O.A. (2013) Channels TV began to use Internet technology first with its broadcast on audio streaming of news and programmes in the 2000s. For Channels TV, news and programmes are streamed live on www.channelstv.com, aside from opportunities available on terrestrial broadcast on UHF 49 frequencies. In March 2013, Channels TV set up its News Online Desk/Unit in preparation for the Social Media broadcast platforms. This made a team to be set up and led by MayowaOgundele, an Online Journalist and a creative writer to oversee the efforts by August 2013, Channels Television created four social media platforms for television broadcast, complementing the terrestrial broadcast. The review has established

that many broadcast organizations or stations in Nigeria have adopted social media tools for media productivity.

Effectiveness of social media tools in the broadcasting industry

The adoption of social media tools in broadcasting has brought about mass participation in programmes. Today, it is possible for viewers or audience on both TV and radio stations to use social media platforms to participate in the news and programmes of the station by logging on to the station website, download the station's app on their mobile device to have full access to top stories covering local news, politics, business, health, sports and entertainment..

According to Channels TV General Operations Manager, KayodeAkintemi (2014), audience participation has been key to the success of the Channels TV mobile effort in Nigeria, and the new platform continues to build on that with a feature programme called "The Beam. By featuring audience responses on the mobile stream, we hope to create meaningful social media conversations on this new stream. The effectiveness of social media tools in broadcasting is reflected through:

Real-time engagement and reach: Social media offers instant interaction and global, real-time news dissemination, which is superior to traditional methods. It enables broadcasters to maintain audience interest in a highly competitive digital environment.

Information gathering and production: Social media has streamlined news gathering, allowing for faster production and transmission of news content. It provides tools for citizen journalism, enabling audiences to participate actively in information sharing.

Audience interaction and personalization: Social media tools enable broadcasters to personalize content and foster direct interaction with viewers and listeners, transforming them from passive consumers to active participants.

Content promotion and brand identity: Social media platforms are essential for promoting TV and radio programs, boosting brand awareness, and enabling broadcasters to remain relevant to younger, digitally native audiences.

Information sharing and backup: Social media platforms allow for the immediate sharing of content and provide a backup to traditional media, enabling audiences to catch up on news at their convenience.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that the adoption of social media tools have proven to be effective in the broadcasting industry through real-time reporting and engagement, audience interaction and personalization, information gathering and production, content promotion and brand identity, information sharing and backup. This explains why many broadcast stations in Nigeria have adopted these tools in the daily operations.

Challenges associated with the use of social media tools for broadcasting operations

Social media also comes with challenges, whether in its adoption or usage. Generally, some challenges that come with the use of social media include fear of privacy invasion, inability to cater for those with a disability, problems of commercial advertising, and the challenge of making terms of the agreement a prerequisite to creating a profile or owning an account, and susceptibility to deception from users across the spectrum. Kasturiand Vardhan (2014) opined that challenges such as acquisition of knowledge

and skills, financial difficulties, power supply issues, and uncoordinated cyber knowledge also bedevil journalism in their quest to adopt new media technologies. This means there are numerous challenges associated with the use of social media tools for broadcasting operations.

Other challenges associated with the use of social media tools for broadcasting in Nigeria were revealed by Aum (2013) include:

Lack of gatekeepers: There are gatekeepers in the mass media but social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Yahoo, and Youtube have no gatekeepers. This therefore presents several implications, first is the risk of overloading the system with unwanted, unrequested, trivial, irrelevant, worthless or inconsequential messages which has increased tremendously. Gatekeepers also function as evaluators of information. Newspaper editors and television news directors consider the authenticity and credibility of potential news sources. If the system works properly, bogus news tips, unsubstantiated rumours, and false information are filtered out before they are published or broadcast. Information obtained on the internet, however, comes without a guarantee. Some of it might be accurate, but some of it you must use at your own risk. For example, some social media pages containing profiles of prominent people in society may be operated by a computer junky somewhere who may not have any relationship with the said prominent person. Information coming through this channel about the person may be false and thus, require verification before use. Having no gatekeeper means having no censorship.

Lack of interpretation: the internet may diminish the interpretation function of the media. Many computer bulletin boards and social media sites as we have seen exist for an impressive array of topics (Dominick, 2002). Information from the internet is mostly raw, and has no interpretation; readers are left to make their interpretation thereby, generating different opinions on an issue or event.

Privacy concern: social media and the internet also raises several privacy concerns. Maintaining a person's privacy in the electronic age is not a new problem, but before the advent of the internet, compiling a detailed dossier on someone required days or even weeks of searching through records scattered in dozens of places. Today, computerised databases let a person accomplish the same thing with only a couple of clicks of a mouse. For the past few years, many governments wrestled with these privacy problems to restrict the availability of personal information. The issue is complicated because many are concerned that government regulation will be so rigid that legitimate searches for information would be difficult. Many prefer voluntary guidelines to laws (Dominick, 2002).

Information Overload: The internet represents an information retrieval tool that is unparalleled-Providing a person knows how to use and understand it. In the days before the internet, students doing research, columnists and commentators will have to look things up in the text, reference book or encyclopedia source that had some recognised authority.

Drawing from the available literature, the challenges associated with the use of social media tools for broadcasting operations range from lack of gatekeepers, fear of privacy invasion, inability to cater for those with a disability, problems of commercial advertising, and the challenge of making terms of the agreement a prerequisite to creating a profile or owning an account, and susceptibility to deception from users across the spectrum.

Conclusion / Recommendations

In conclusion, the adoption of social media tools in the Nigeria broadcasting industry has proven to be effective to some extent as it has brought about real-time reporting and engagement,audience interaction and personalization, information gathering and production, content promotion and brand identity, information sharing and backup over the years despite the challenges of lack of gatekeepers, fear of privacy invasion, inability to cater for those with a disability, problems of commercial advertising, and the challenge of making terms of the agreement a prerequisite to creating a profile or owning an account, and susceptibility to deception from users across the spectrum.privacy concerns, lack of interpretations to information overload. The study therefore recommends full time adoption of social media platforms for enhanced real-time reporting and audience engagement as many Nigerians no longer rely on the traditional media while regulating the application in the industry to prevent abuse among broadcasters.

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